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Notice of Allowability	Application No.	Applicant(s)	
	10/687,143	BONSIGNORE ET AL.	
	Examiner Kathleen Sonnett	Art Unit 3731	

-- The MAILING DATE of this communication appears on the cover sheet with the correspondence address--

All claims being allowable, PROSECUTION ON THE MERITS IS (OR REMAINS) CLOSED in this application. If not included herewith (or previously mailed), a Notice of Allowance (PTOL-85) or other appropriate communication will be mailed in due course. **THIS NOTICE OF ALLOWABILITY IS NOT A GRANT OF PATENT RIGHTS.** This application is subject to withdrawal from issue at the initiative of the Office or upon petition by the applicant. See 37 CFR 1.313 and MPEP 1308.

1. This communication is responsive to 8/28/2006.
2. The allowed claim(s) is/are 1, 4-9.
3. Acknowledgment is made of a claim for foreign priority under 35 U.S.C. § 119(a)-(d) or (f).
 - a) All
 - b) Some*
 - c) None
 1. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received.
 2. Certified copies of the priority documents have been received in Application No. _____.
 3. Copies of the certified copies of the priority documents have been received in this national stage application from the International Bureau (PCT Rule 17.2(a)).

* Certified copies not received: _____.

Applicant has THREE MONTHS FROM THE "MAILING DATE" of this communication to file a reply complying with the requirements noted below. Failure to timely comply will result in ABANDONMENT of this application.
THIS THREE-MONTH PERIOD IS NOT EXTENDABLE.

4. A SUBSTITUTE OATH OR DECLARATION must be submitted. Note the attached EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT or NOTICE OF INFORMAL PATENT APPLICATION (PTO-152) which gives reason(s) why the oath or declaration is deficient.
5. CORRECTED DRAWINGS (as "replacement sheets") must be submitted.
 - (a) including changes required by the Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) attached
 - 1) hereto or 2) to Paper No./Mail Date _____.
 - (b) including changes required by the attached Examiner's Amendment / Comment or in the Office action of Paper No./Mail Date _____.

Identifying indicia such as the application number (see 37 CFR 1.84(c)) should be written on the drawings in the front (not the back) of each sheet. Replacement sheet(s) should be labeled as such in the header according to 37 CFR 1.121(d).
6. DEPOSIT OF and/or INFORMATION about the deposit of BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL must be submitted. Note the attached Examiner's comment regarding REQUIREMENT FOR THE DEPOSIT OF BIOLOGICAL MATERIAL.

Attachment(s)

- | | |
|--|--|
| 1. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Notice of References Cited (PTO-892) | 5. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Informal Patent Application |
| 2. <input type="checkbox"/> Notice of Draftsperson's Patent Drawing Review (PTO-948) | 6. <input type="checkbox"/> Interview Summary (PTO-413),
Paper No./Mail Date _____. |
| 3. <input type="checkbox"/> Information Disclosure Statements (PTO/SB/08),
Paper No./Mail Date _____. | 7. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Amendment/Comment |
| 4. <input type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Comment Regarding Requirement for Deposit
of Biological Material | 8. <input checked="" type="checkbox"/> Examiner's Statement of Reasons for Allowance |
| | 9. <input type="checkbox"/> Other _____. |

DETAILED ACTION

EXAMINER'S AMENDMENT

An examiner's amendment to the record appears below. Should the changes and/or additions be unacceptable to applicant, an amendment may be filed as provided by 37 CFR 1.312. To ensure consideration of such an amendment, it MUST be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee.

Authorization for this examiner's amendment was given in a telephone interview with Carl Evens on 9/27/2006.

In line 14 of claim 1, "each" has been added between "that" and "bridging".

In line 15 of claim 1, "a" has been replaced by --any--.

In line 2 of claim 4, "3" has been replaced by --1-- so that claim 4 depends off of claim 1.

Reasons for Allowance

The following is an examiner's statement of reasons for allowance:

The self-expanding stent with independent, interlocking segments of the instant application is allowable over the prior art. The most relevant prior art will be discussed. In particular, Chew et al. (U.S. 2003/0135266) and Alt et al. (U.S. 6,251,134) disclose stents with independent, interlocking segments. In the prior art of both Alt et al. and Chew et al., the bridging element in one stent segment will line up with one of the bridging elements on each adjacent stent segment as seen in Fig. 2 of Alt et al. and Fig. 5B of Chew et al. and the instant application therefore distinguishes itself from the prior art with the limitation "such that each bridging element in one stent segment does not line up with any bridging element on an adjacent stent segment". Both Chew et al. and Alt et al. disclose bridging elements (62, 31, respectively) that are configured to be releasably engaged with a receptacle on an adjacent

independent segment. However, the structure of the bridging element and receptacle of Chew et al. (62, 64) and Alt et al. (35, 34) are different than the claimed structure of these elements in the instant application. Neither reference discloses an elongate member extending from one of the plurality of loops that is longer than the plurality of struts. Furthermore, neither reference discloses a receptacle comprising a space between adjacent longitudinal struts and an *expanded loop*. Therefore, the prior art does not disclose or fairly suggest the stent with a structure including an elongate member that is longer than the plurality of struts, a receptacle comprising a space between adjacent longitudinal struts and an expanded loop, and at least one bridging element such that each bridging element in one stent segment does not line up with any bridging element on an adjacent stent segment.

Any comments considered necessary by applicant must be submitted no later than the payment of the issue fee and, to avoid processing delays, should preferably accompany the issue fee. Such submissions should be clearly labeled "Comments on Statement of Reasons for Allowance."

Conclusion

Any inquiry concerning this communication or earlier communications from the examiner should be directed to Kathleen Sonnett whose telephone number is 571-272-5576. The examiner can normally be reached on 7:30-5:00, M-F, alternate Fridays off.

If attempts to reach the examiner by telephone are unsuccessful, the examiner's supervisor, Anh Tuan Nguyen can be reached on 571-272-4963. The fax phone number for the organization where this application or proceeding is assigned is 571-273-8300.

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Information regarding the status of an application may be obtained from the Patent Application Information Retrieval (PAIR) system. Status information for published applications may be obtained from either Private PAIR or Public PAIR. Status information for unpublished applications is available through Private PAIR only. For more information about the PAIR system, see <http://pair-direct.uspto.gov>. Should you have questions on access to the Private PAIR system, contact the Electronic Business Center (EBC) at 866-217-9197 (toll-free). If you would like assistance from a USPTO Customer Service Representative or access to the automated information system, call 800-786-9199 (IN USA OR CANADA) or 571-272-1000.



GLENN K. DAWSON
PRIMARY EXAMINER

KCS
9/25/2006